

Message Text

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR PARA 1 SUB PARA B LINE13 IMI 13

E.O. 11552 GDS

TAGS OTRA, PEPR, AR, US (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT WHAT KISSINGER TOLD THE ARGENTINES

REF: BUENOS AIRES 4937

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: IN HIS APPROACH TO THE KEY QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND TERRORISM, DR. KISSINGER AVOIDED THE PITFALLS OF OFFENDING HIS GOA HOST ON THE ONE HAND AND ON THE OTHER, OF EXPLICITLY CRITICIZING THE APPLICATION OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY-- FACTS OF WHICH HE EVIDENTLY IS IN DISAGREEMENT. GOA OFFICIALS APPEAR PLEASED WITH THE VISIT ITSELF AND WITH WHAT HE HAD TO SAY, BUT THEY HAVE NOT EXPLOITED THE VISIT AS MUCH AS THEY COULD HAVE POLITICALLY. PERHAPS, THEY WERE NOT CERTAIN HOW IT WOULD COME OUT AND PREFERRED TO TAKE THE CAUTIOUS ROUTE, OR PERHAPS THEY WERE JUST BEING GOOD HOSTS ENTRALLED TO HAVE A PRESTIGIOUS GUEST. THE WESTER ORIENTED FOREIGN AFFAIRS ELITE OF THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS CERTAINLY WAS DELIGHTED WITH DR. KISSINGER'S

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SUBSTATIVE APPROACH. HE DEMONSTRATED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE ESSENCE OF WHAT ARGENTINA WAS ALL ABOUT. THE INTELLIGENTSIA HE CAME INTO CONTACT WITH HAD DIFFICULTY ANSWERING SOME OF HIS MORE POINTED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE MALFUNCTIONING OF THE ARGENTINE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN RECENT DECADES. END SUMMARY

1. FOLLOWING IS A SYNTHESIS OF OUR SENSE AND THAT OF THE LOCAL PRESS OF SOME SALIENT POINTS MADE BY DR. KISSINGER IN CONVERSATIONS WITH ARGENTINES DURING HIS STAY LAST WEEK, INCLUDING IN A "SOMOS" INTERVIEW (PUBLISHED JUNE 23), A MEETING WITH ARGENTINE INTELLECTUALS OF THE INSTITUTO DI TELLA, AN "OFF THE RECORD" COLLOQUY WITH INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS REPORTERS, AN EXTEMPORANEOUS ADDRESS BEFORE THE NEWLY FORMED ARGENTINE COUNCIL OF FOREIGN RELATIONS AND A TAPED INTERVIEW FOR BERNARDO NEUSTADT'S TV PROGRAM.

A. BIPARTISAN FOREIGN POLICY - HE IS A FIRM BELIEVER IN THE NEED FOR A BIPARTISAN US FOREIGN POLICY WHICH REFLECTS BASIC VALUES AND INTEREST AND NOT THE INDIVIDUAL IDIOSYNCRACIES OF POLITICIANS WHO CHANGE EVERY FOUR OR EIGHT YEARS. HE IS AN OLD FRIEND OF CYRUS VANCE, FOR WHOM HE HAS THE HIGHEST RESPECT AS REFLECTED BY THE FACT HE TOLD "TIME" MAGAZINE IN 1976 THAT VANCE WAS THE DEMOCRAT HE WOULD CHOOSE TO SUCCEED HIM AS SECRETARY OF STATE. (HE TOLD GOA OFFICIALS PRIVATELY THAT HE DID NOT COME TO ARGENTINA TO CRITICIZE US POLICY AND HE REPEATED THIS ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION WHEN QUESTION TOO CLOSELY BY REPORTERS ABOUT HIS PRESUMED DIFFERENCES WITH THE ADMINISTRATION OVER THE APPLICATION OF ITS HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY.)

B. TERRORISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS - TERRORISM IS AN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM AND NOT STRICTLY AN ARGENTINE
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PHENOMENON, BECAUSE IT IS AIMED AT SYSTEMATICALLY DESTROYING LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT IN THE WESTERN WORLD. TERRORISTS ARE THE WORST VIOLATORS OF HUMAN RIGHTS; THEY ARE PRESENT-DAY FASCISTS WHO EMPLOY SLOGANS OF THE EXTREME LEFT. GOVERNMENTS WHICH FACE UP TO THE PROBLEM SQUARELY SHOULD BE SUPPORTED BECAUSE THEY ARE DEFENDING ALL OF US. BUT IT IS IMPORTANT FOR A GOVERNMENT TO KNOW WHEN IT HAS WON THE BATTLE IN ORDER NOT TO PROLONG THE EMERGENCY SITUATION UNNECESSARILY, WHICH COULD END IN COUNTER-PROMPTIVE RESULTS. AT THAT POINT, CONDITIONS APPROPRIATE FOR WAR MUST BE CHANGED FOR CONDITIONS APPROPRIATE FOR PEACE. THE METHODS EMPLOYED TO COMBAT TERRORISM CAN CREATE PROBLEMS IN THE DEGREE THAT THEY DEPART FROM ESTABLISHED NORMS. WHAT IS AN APPROPRIATE METHOD CANNOT BE DETERMINED IN THE ABSTRACT; MUCH DEPENDS ON THE PARTICULAR CIRUMSTANCES IN A GIVEN CASE. (IN OTHER WORDS, COMMENTED "LA NACION", KISSINGER SAID "MORE OR LESS THE SAME AS DAVID NEWSOM A MONTH AGO.") -- KISSINGER ALSO SAID THAT "A DISTINCTION SHOULD BE MADE BETWEEN TOTALITARIAN GOVERNMENTS WHICH ARE THE ANTI-THESIS OF DEMOCRACY AND AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENTS WHICH PROFESS THEIR INTENTIONS TO EVENTUALLY RESTORE DEMOCRACY.

IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO PURSUE A POLICY OF SINGLING OUT OUR ALLIES FOR PUNISHMENT BECAUSE OF THE WAY THEY HANDLE THEIR TERRORIST PROBLEMS WHEN THE TOTALITARIAN COUNTRIES ARE THE WORSE OFFENDERS AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS AND (HE SEEMED TO IMPLY) RESPONSIBLE FOR OR AT LEAST THE BENEFICIARIES OF TERRORISM.

-- IN ANSWER TO NEUSTADT'S COMMENT THAT THE USG SEEMED MORE PREOCCUPIED WITH THE WELFARE OF TERRIST ASSASSINS THAN THE ASSASSINATIONS THEY COMMIT, KISSINGER RESPONDED THAT IF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE KNEW MORE ABOUT WHAT ARGENTINA HAD SUFFERED OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS, THEY

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WOULD HAVE A BETTER PERSPECTIVE OF THE CURRENT SITUATION AND PERHAPS THEY WOULD NOT HAVE CONCENTRATED THEIR PRE-OCCUPATION OVER WHAT HAS HAPPENED LATELY (I.E., GOA REPRESSION).

-- TO A QUESTION DURING THE OFF THE RECORD SESSION ABOUT SUPPOSED DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PATT DERIAN AND AMBASSADOR TODMAN, KISSINGER REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THERE WERE IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION WITH RESPECT TO FOREIGN POLICY IN THE "SOMOS" ARTICLE HE IS QUOTED AS HAVING GREAT RESPECT FOR TODMAN. TODMAN'S TRANSFER TO MADRID DID NOT SIGNAL A DECISIVE CHANGE IN POLICY TOWARDS LATIN AMERICA. C. CUBA AND AFRICA. (SEE REFTEL) THE US WOULD HAVE STOPPED THE CUBANS IN ANGOLA HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR CONGRESS. THE CUBANS IN ANGOLA HAD NO LEGITIMATE RIGHT TO TAKE IMPERIALIST VENTURES IN AFRICA. THERE WAS NO REASON WHY THE US MUST STAND IDLY BY AS CUBA (AND THE USSR) TAKE OVER.

D. EXECUTIVE VS LEGISLATIVE POWER IN FOREIGN POLICY -
A CONGRESS OF OVER 400 MEMBERS COULD NOT CONDUCT US
FOREIGN POLICY, BECAUSE SECRET DIPLOMACY WAS IMPOSSIBLE
WITH SO MANY ACTORS. A WORKABLE MODUS OPERANDI HAD TO
BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE
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POWERS.

E. CARTER ADMINISTRATION AND THE PRESS - IN THE OFF RECORD SESSION, HE SUGGESTED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WAS BEGINNING TO REALIZE IT COULD NOT PERMIT THE PRESS TO CALL ITS FOREIGN POLICY SHOTS. THERE WAS NO REASON WHY THE ADMINISTRATION HAD TO ANSWER EVERY QUESTION FROM THE PRESS INSTANTLY, THEREBY GIVING AWAY ITS HAND IN INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS.

F. STATE DEPARTMENT -THE DEPARTMENT (OFF THE RECORD), WITH ALL THE MACHINERY IT HAD AT ITS DISPOSAL, SHOULD BE THE CENTRAL SOURCE OF FOREIGN POLICY ADVICE TO THE PRESIDENT.

G. US AND THE NON-ALIGNED - THE US COULD NOT BE THE LEADER OF THE NON ALIGNED -- WHICH WAS A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS. THE CLOSER WE TRIED TO MOVE TOWARDS THE NON-ALIGNED THE MORE THEY WOULD MOVE AWAY FROM US.

H. LATIN AMERICA - WHEN HE WAS SECRETARY OF STATE, THE LATIN AMERICANS TRIED TO HAVE THEIR CAKE AND EAT IT TOO. THEY JOINED THE G-77 NATIONS, BUT TRIED TO FORCE TRADE AND OTHER CONCESSIONS FROM US MORE APPROPRIATE TO POLITICAL ALLIEDS. OAS SYSTEM MEETINGS WERE USED TO GIVE THE US PERIODIC REPORT CARDS ON HOW WELL WE WERE RESPONDING TO LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC DEMANDS...US FOREIGN POLICY IN LATIN AMERICA SHOULD CENTER ON THE IMPORTANT COUNTRIES SUCH AS ARGENTINA, BRAZIL AND MEXICO. (THIS IN RESPONSE TO REPORTERS' ATTEMPT TO THROW BACK AT KISSINGER THE FAMOUS NIXON-KISSINGER DICTUM ABOUT THE PRIMACY OF BRAZIL).

I. ARGENTINA - IF ONE LOOKED AT ARGENTINA IN 1930, IT APPEARED TO BE A COUNTRY DESTINED FOR GREATNESS, BUT SOMETHING THREW ARGENTINA OFF THE TRACK CONVERTING IT INTO A CLASSICAL CASE OF POLITICAL INSTABILITY. HE COMMENTED TO US THAT HE COULD NOT GET A SATISFACTORY ANSWER TO HIS QUESTION WHERE ARGENTINA WOULD BE IN FIVE
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YEARS, OR WHY THE ARGENTINES HE MET WERE SO SURE THAT THIS TIME THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR A NEW ERA OF STABILITY WHEN PRECEDING MILITARY REGIMES HAD FAILED. PRIVATELY,

HE ALSO DESCRIBED TO US HIS VIEW OF THE PERONIST GOVERNMENT WHICH HE CALLED DEMAGOGIC, POPULIST AND THIRD WORLD ORIENTED. THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT WAS PRO-US AND WANTED TO BE PART OF THE DEVELOPED WESTERN WORLD. WE SHOULD SUPPORT IT.

2. COMMENT. DR. RICARDO YOFRE, PRESIDENT VIDELA'S AIDE WHO SET UP THE KISSINGER PROGRAMME AND SCHEDULE IN ARGENTINA, MAINTAINS TO US THAT THE PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF THE PRESIDENT'S INVITATION WAS TO ALLOW DR. KISSINGER TO SEE THE WORLD CUP SOCCER GAMES AND TO GET TO KNOW ARGENTINA. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THE VIST WAS "POSITIVE" FROM THE GOA'S VIEWPOINT--THEREBY IMPLICITLY SEEING SOME POLITICAL VALUE IN THE VISIT FOR THE ARGENTINES--YOFRE'S MAIN EMPHASIS AND INSTRUCTIONS SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN TO SET UP A PROGRAM WHICH WOULD PLEASE THEIR WORLD-FAMOUS GUEST AND SATISFY HIS INTERESTS. THE HOSTS WERE EAGER TO DEMONSTRATE THE BEST IN ARGENTINE HOSPITALITY TO A DISTINGUISHED VISITOR. FROM THE START- AND PARTICULARLY AFTER KISSINGER MADE CLEAR HE COULD NOT BE USED TO EMBARRASS THE CURRENT US ADMINISTRATION--THE GOA TRIED TO LIMIT PRESS ACCESS IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE QUESTIONS WHICH MIGHT BE UNCOMFORTABLE FOR BOTH KISSINGER AND THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT. THE GOA DID NOT EXPLOIT KISSINGER'S VIEWS ON TERRORISM AS MUCH AS IT COULD HAVE. INDEED, PRESIDENT VIDELA'S PRIVATE ACCESS TO HIS GUEST APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN VERY LIMITED. YOFRE APPEARED TO REGRET THIS IN A CONVERSATION YESTERDAY. HE ALSO REGRETTED THAT DR. KISSINGER'S SCHEDULE DID NOT PERMIT HIM MORE TIME TO DELVE INTO AND COMMENT ON ARGENTINA'S INTERNAL POLICIES AND PROSPECTS.(YOFRE WAS ANNOYED THAT MARTINEZ DE HOZ AND THE LANDOWNING AND BANKING ELITE WERE MORE CONFIDENTIAL

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INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING SOUTH AFRICA AND THE AFRICAN HORN THAN THE PROSPECTS FOR RESTORING POLITICAL DEMOCRACY IN ARGENTINA.)
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